



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 22, 2009

Contact: Bob Atkins (858) 692-9264

MEDITERRANEAN FRUIT FLY DETECTED IN MIRA MESA *County Ag, Weights and Measures Traps Mated Fruit Fly, Triggering Treatment*

County pest detection staff trapped a mated Mediterranean fruit fly this week on the west side of Mira Mesa, officials announced today.

"Homeowners and people moving through the area should not remove fruits and vegetables from the area because they may be infested," said Agricultural Commissioner Robert Atkins.

A mated female fruit fly can carry a male's sperm and is able to lay eggs whenever it wants throughout its lifetime.

The discovery triggers treatments to eradicate the insect. Host plants, where the Medfly was found and adjacent properties will be treated with Naturalyte which contains the active ingredient, Spinosad, a naturally-occurring extract from bacteria. Intensive trapping by the County and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will be done in an 81-square-mile-radius, where the fruit fly was found. This site is outside the boundaries of the already established Medfly quarantine in the El Cajon/Spring Valley area.

Additionally, sterile flies are being released to mate with the Medfly. Residents will not notice an increase in flies. Since this destructive pest was first found in California in 1975, every Medfly infestation in the state has been successfully eradicated.

The Medfly is known to damage more than 260 different fruits, vegetables and plants. Damage occurs when the female lays eggs inside the fruit. The eggs hatch into maggots that tunnel through the flesh of the fruit, making it unfit for consumption. A crop loss value for commercial growers in San Diego County could be as high as \$280 million.

Residents can report suspicious flies to the **CDFA PEST HOTLINE at 1-800-491-1899 or 619-698-1046**. If your yard contains fruit trees and you would like to have a fruit fly trap placed on your property, call the County's Pest Detection Program at **1-800-300-8727 (TRAP)**. For more information on Mediterranean fruit fly, visit the CDFA Web site at http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/phpps/pdep/treatment/medfly_treatment.html.

###